

Past simple I

SEMESTRAL UNI - 2023 II

Verb <i>to be</i> in Past Simple A year ago	Verb <i>to be</i> in Present Simple Now
I was a fireman.	I am a fireman.
You were a student.	You are a student.
He was a lawyer.	He is a lawyer.
She was a teacher.	She is a teacher.
It was a dog.	It is a dog.
We were friends.	We are friends.
You were students.	You are students.
They were doctors.	They are doctors.

We use the simple past tense of the verb ***to be*** for any state to describe a person or situation in the past.

Describing age.



Affirmative form: I was 20 years old.

Negative form: I was not 20 years old.

Negative form using contraction: I wasn't 20 years old.

Interrogative form: Was I 20 years old?

Affirmative answer: Yes, I was.

Negative answer: No, I was not.

Negative answer with contraction: No, I wasn't.

Describing weight.



Affirmative form: I was 50 kilos when I was 20 years old.

Negative form: I was not 50 kilos when I was 20 years old.

Negative form using contraction: I wasn't 50 kilos when I was 20 years old.

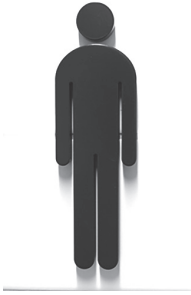
Interrogative form: Was I 50 kilos when I was 20 years old?

Affirmative answer: Yes, I was.

Negative answer: No, I was not.

Negative answer with contraction: No, I wasn't.

Describing height.



Affirmative form: I was 1.60 meters when I was 20 years old.

Negative form: I was not 1.60 meters when I was 20 years old.

Negative form using contraction: I wasn't 1.60 meters when I was 20 years old.

Interrogative form: Was I 1.60 meters when I was 20 years old?

Affirmative answer: Yes, I was.

Negative answer: No, I was not.

Negative answer with contraction: No, I wasn't.

In case of answers to questions that refer to the past tense, we have two forms in the affirmative (YES) and two forms in the negative (NO): the long answer and the short answer (with contraction):



Example of long answer:

Were you at the library yesterday?

No, I was not at the library yesterday.



Example of short answer:

Were you at the library yesterday?

No, I wasn't.

Past Simple Tense

The Past Simple Tense is used to refer to actions that were completed in a time period before the present time. In the Simple Past the process of performing the action is not important. What matters is that the action was completed in the past. The action may have been in the recent past or a long time ago.

Using the Simple Past Tense

- The Simple Past is used for actions that started and finished at a specific time in the past. It's also possible to use the simple past in a sentence without specifying a time, but it must have previously been made clear that the speaker is referring to a finished period.

I saw a movie last week.

- The Simple Past is used to describe several actions that were completed in the past.

I finished work, walked to the beach and met my friends.

- The Simple Past is used to describe a process that started and finished in the past. In this case, the process of the action is long and is used by specifying time periods such as 'the whole year' or 'all day'.

I lived in Italy for five years.

- The Simple Past can also be used in sentences that describe past habits. These sentences have the same purpose as the expression 'used to'. It should be clear in this kind of sentence that the action referred to is a habit. Time expressions like *always, often, usually* and *never* can be used to underline this.

I often played football when I was a young man.

Forming the Simple Past

Subject	Verb To be	Verb To have	Verb To do
I	was	had	did
You	were	had	did
He/she/it	was	had	did
We	were	had	did
You	were	had	did
They	were	had	did

Affirmative sentences in the Simple Past

In affirmative sentences the word order is subject + verb and the form of the verb in the simple past is the same for all subjects (with the exception of 'to be' – *was/were*).

Subject + past simple + object

For example:

I played football yesterday.

He saw his family last week.

I was in France in June.

In order to convert regular verbs from their base form to the simple past form, we add -ed. For irregular verbs, however, the simple past form doesn't follow this rule and can vary significantly and you simply need to learn them by heart. There are many irregular verbs but below you can find the most common ones that you need to know for daily use.

- place – placed
- dance – danced
- plan – planned
- stop – stopped
- fix – fixed
- snow – snowed
- rain – rained
- need – needed
- help – helped
- add – added
- worry – worried
- play – played

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- be – was/were
- buy – bought
- come – came
- do – did
- eat – ate
- find – found
- go – went
- have – had
- leave – left
- make – made
- pay – paid
- see – saw
- take – took
- tell – told
- write – wrote